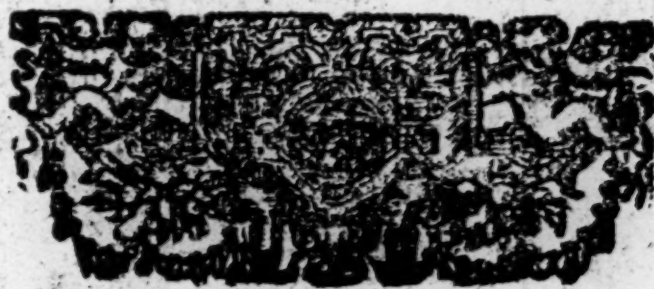


A Brief
TREATISE
ABOUT THE
Spiritual Nature
OF
GOD
AND OF HIS
WORSHIP.

By *Edm. Bagshaw*, Student of Ch. Ch.



LONDON,
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A Prefatory

EPISTLE

Dedicated to the

Right Honourable

The E A R L of

A N G L E S E Y.

One of his Majesties most Honourable

P R I V Y C O U N C E L.

R I G H T H O N O U R A B L E.



Those who owe great sums of Money, and withal have any thank-ful esteem for the civility and kindness of their Creditours, do seldom come to ask any longer time of forbearance, but they bring a Present in their hands, not so much in part of payment, as to give a Test and Evidence of their Gratitude, and to shew how willing they are to deserve a Favour. Thus, my Lord, I having now some moneths been indebt-

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ed to your Lordship, for a Work of another Nature, and by those many Intervenient Businesses (which this Town is but too full of, and which as I could not prevent, so your Lordship was not willing I should decline them) foreseeing that I shal not presently be in a capacity of satisfying my own Desires, which shall alwayes be commensurate to my Obedience unto Your Lordships Commands; I made hast therefore, together with my request for some longer time, to bring along with me this small Offering, not onely as part of the Tribute I owe, but likewise to prevent all sinister suspitions, as if, while I omitted to do that which your Lordship principally enjoyned, I had altogether idled away my time, and done just nothing at all; which, besides the sin of it to my self, would be too unhandsome a return of your Lordships Noblenesse, in affording me so full convenience and opportunities of studie.

And though some of those things I have writ, since this Engagement was upon me, may seem to be Casual and undesigned in their Choice, yet I must humbly leave it to your Lordships Judgement (whose thorough knowledge of that Controversie makes you the fittest person to decide it) to resolve, whether my late Treatise about Heresies, and this about the Spirituality of Gods Nature & Worship, were not antecedently necessary to be published, before I proceeded to meddle with the Popes Infallibility; which, as your Lordship hath often most judiciously observed, is the At-
las

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As and Principal Column to support all that Babylonish Building; and could it but once be removed out of the way (which sure is no great Mastery, in a thing that is so Airy and so defencelesse) all that is built upon it, would, for want of a Foundation, tumble down to the Ground. And this employment, of laying my Ax to the Root of that Tree, your Lordship, who could have done it much better, was pleased long since to lay upon me, and thereby (that you might be free to serve the Publick) denyed your self that Honour, which, in so famous and concerning a Cause, Your Lordships own more able and learned Pen would have justly gained you.

But how impatient and eager soever I was to perform this Task, and thereby give your Lordship a suddain Proof of my obedience, yet I had not waded far into it, but presently my edge was taken off; for the Arguments I met with to maintain that Opinion, were so very Weak and Fallacious; there was so large a train of Non sequitur's, and such a series of Impossible Suppositions, that I grew quickly tired, not so much with the length and difficulty of the Journey, as with the Noysom Dirt and meer Tediousness of the Way: And I immediately took it for granted, that none of those Authors I read, did believe the Popes Infallibility themselves, since they took so little pains to convince others. And here, my Lord, for want of finding something that might deserve a Scholar-like confutation, I have stuck ever since, and though
my

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my Papers wanted but one day to perfect them, yet the Absurdities I oppose, are so grosse and open, and the Conquest so very easie, that I am almost ashamed of my victory, and therefore have not yet been at the pains to compleat it.

Whilst I did thus delay to perfect my First Design, I thought Writers of Controversies ought to do, like Generals of Armies; before they sit down before the Capital City, they summon in every petty Garison, which might either impede their March, or prove a Retreat for the vanquished Enemy: So before the Main Question in any Controversie be handled, every Objection that lies perdue in the way, must be answered, that so those stumbling-blocks being removed, we may have a better prospect into the Strength or Weakness of any Point, as it stands by it self, without the Enterfering of those Additional Appendixes. In this, the Kingdome of Christ and Antichrist agree, that to the Destruction of the one, as well as to the Establishting of the other, the way must be first prepared and levelled, and before their Fort of Infallibility be taken, all the snares they scatter in the way, all their Mists and undermining Policies, all their Ambushes and little Hiding-places, and lastly every thing, which may render the Victory insecure and hazzardous must be discovered and prevented.

*Since then the Papists do commonly use two Masks, under which they cover their Dark and Divilish Doctrines; the one of a terrible and frightful appearance, (which is
their*

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their vehement urging the great Inconveniencies that follow separation from them; in which the multiplicity of Heresies is most Tragically insisted on : And for which our Church is still reproached by them as Schismatical) The other of a more benign and pleasing Aspect ; which is the outward gaudery, & curious dresse of their Religion, wherewith that Spiritual Whore attires her self, and strongly fascinates her unwarry beholders. In opposition to the first, before I had the honour to attend your Lordship, I pleaded for Christian Liberty, in the just extent and latitude of it ; I have already shewed that those ill consequences so much talked of, do not flow from Liberty, (which no Rational, much, lesse Spiritual agent can be without) but from the abuse of it ; which if it breaks out into Civil or Moral misdemeanors, the Civil Laws ought to punish, unto which our Outward Man is subject ; but if it terminate and rest in speculative errors, which may otherwise be called Heresies, such Tares ought to grow together with the Wheat ; for an unanswerable reason, which Christ hath given, though Antichrist approves it not, for fear the rooting up of them by violence, should prove the Destruction of the good Corn also ; for since every Heretick, thinks his own Opinion to be true ; if he finds nothing used to suppress him, but such force, as no Scripture doth countenance ; what will hinder him, when he gains Power, from using Legem Talionis, and endeavouring the same violent waies
of

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of suppressing dissenters ? and then it will be in vain to plead for Liberty, which by appearing first in persecution of Hereticks, we denied to others. And this, my Lord, is the summe of what I have lately published, and dedicated to your Noble Kinsman, who is most Dear to your Lordship, not more by the nearnesse of his Relation unto your Excellent Lady, then by his Resemblance and Imitation of the same Vertuous and Noble Qualities. Unto whose indeavours on my behalf, I have methinks made but too faint a return, since by his means I have been made partaker of one of the greatest Temporal Happineses I could ambition, and that is an acquaintance with, and a Personall Relation to your Lordship and Family ; in which who ever fails of living virtuously, must fall inexcusably by his own Fault, since he is every day taught the contrary, and that by Eminent and Illustrious Examples.

As for that other Maske of a Glittering and Pompous Worship, which makes the Romane Religion so taking with Vulgar and Injudicious Observers ; and by which their eyes are so dazzled, that they are unwilling to admit of any thing, which may undeceive them ; I did conceive nothing could better take them off from doting upon that Painted Carcasse of Devotion, then to make a discourse about the Inward purity of Gospel-worship, which depends upon and flows from the consideration of Gods Spiritual Nature ; which were it but once thoroughly understood, men would presently spurne and trample upon all that

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that Devised and Fantastick Beauty of the Romish Dagon; and when true worshippers felt, how much the Splendor of service, which feeds the eye, is short of the Spirituality of it, which satisfies the soul; they would no longer feed upon Huskes, or let their senses lead them in the choise of their Religion. Since it may be found by experience that Thretorical Pomp, Delightful Aires, Well-tuned Orisons and the loud Insignificant Jargon of Latine Payers, do only glut and sate the appetite, but leave the Understanding unfruitful; like Rich and Poinant sawces, they gratifie the Flesh, but perish with the Using, and after all the Immoderate care about them, their end must be to be cast out into the Draught.

I have therefore in this short Treatise endeavoured to raise the Soul, that it might understand the True Height of Religious Worship, by fixing an intent eye upon the Author of it, which may be of great Use in this Age we live in, as equally opposing the Bold Atheisme of some, and the mean-spirited Superstition of others; and because I intend it as an Introduction unto my following Discourse against the Pope and Church of Romes Infallibility, I humbly begg your Lordship's acceptance of it, which is the only way to make both It and the Author Considerable. Since, to omit your Lordship's other Excellencies, even in this very part of Learning (which argues a great and universal insight) of Accurate and close writing

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as well as speaking, your Lordship hath gained such a General and Deserved Esteem, that if this piece doth pass into the World, under the Countenance of your Lordships Approbation, it will be a sufficient pass-port, without any other Recommendation.

But I shall forbear to urge, what, though it may become me to speak, because I speak knowingly, yet your Lordship may be unwilling to hear, since you care not for living in the Aire of your own praise; I shall conclude therefore, with desiring that your Lordship may be long preserved to do, what you have alwaies hitherto done, things truly great and Noble; that while others begin to scorn Religion, you may still go on to practise the Truth and stricktness of it; That with Your Honourable and Virtuons Lady and Family, You may shine in the brightest Sphere of Honour here, and of Happiness hereafter, this is and shall be the Constant Prayer of

My Lord Your Lordships most Obliged

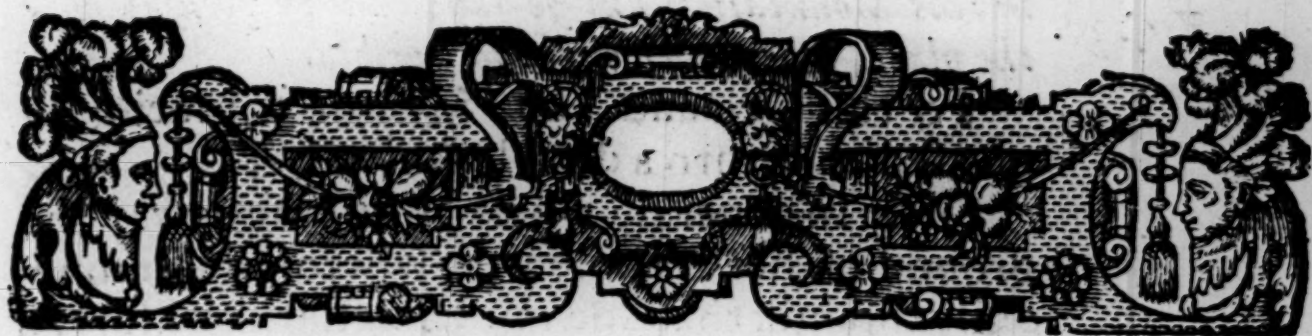
Drury-Lane
Feb. 15. 1661.

and most Obedient Servant

and Chaplain

Edw. Bagshaw.

John



John 4.24.

*God is a Spirit, and he will be Worship-
ed in Spirit and in Truth.*

IN this Chapter is contained the Substance of a Discourse, between our Saviour and the *Woman of Samaria*; who perceiving at last that our Saviour was a *Prophet*, because he had told her a thing, which she thought concealed from all the World; thereupon she presently desires satisfaction, in that great and famous Controversie, which at that time was handled with great Animosity, Namely, Whether God was to be Worshiped on Mount *Gerizim*, according to the *Samaritan*; or on Mount *Moriab*, which was *Sion*, according to the *Jewish Institution*. She, It seems, thinking it absolutely Necessary, that God should be served in one of those two places, and in no other: and to defend her self in her present way of Worship, she makes use of that common *Asylum*, of Lazy and Ignorant Superstition; I mean, *Tradition* and the Practice

Vers. 19.

Vers. 20. of her Fathers ; Our Fathers, saith she, *Worshipped in this Mountain ; but ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place, where men ought to worship.*

To this Demand, our Saviour is graciously pleased to return a double Answer.

Mal. I. II. First, In general, whereby he takes away the ground of her Scruple ; for whereas she erroneously thought that God must necessarily be served in one of those two places ; our Saviour tells her, that the *hour or time was approaching, when neither on this Mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, ye shall worship the Father*, i. e. that God would no longer have his Worship limited and fixed to this or that peculiar place ; but as all places were in their own Nature Equal, so in every place, where men met together to serve God, *pure Incense, viz. of Prayer and Praise* should be offered up to God ; and that it should not be material, *where, but how*, men served him, as to his acceptance of them.

Secondly, And more particularly, our Saviour refutes her fond Argument, whereby she nuzled up her self in her own *Superstition ; Te i. Samaritan^s, Worship*, saith he, *ye know not what : i. e.* However ye plead prescription, and Custom of your Ancestors ; yet in Religious Worship, ye ought not to be guided barely by the Example of your Fathers, nor draw over you the Mask of Antiquity, to countenance an Error ; for trace up your Opinion to the Top, and let it run as high in Antiquity, as you please ; yet as long as you have no certain and infallible Rule to walk by, but devise forms of your own Heads, and serve God, not according to the Word

Word of God, but your own Inventions ; the Older your Opinion is, the worse it is ; as being nothing else but Gray-headed Ignorance, and Dotage made incurable by Time. But, saith he, *We know what we worship : i. We Jews have received from God himself Ordinances and Rites of Worship, according to which we serve him ; not weakly confining God to a Place, as you do ; but obediently worshipping him in that place which he himself hath appointed ; and of which many glorious things are spoken, as that this Mountain shall be exalted above all Mountains, and all Nations Isa. 2. 2. shall flow in unto it ; And that, a Law shall go out from Sion, and the Word of God from Jerusalem : Micah 4.* with many other special Priviledges, which long^{1.} since have been prophesied of in reference to Jerusalem, our place of worship ; by which we know, and are infallibly assured, that Salvation is of the Jews ; i. e. the saving Doctrine is onely to be found amongst us, and you Samaritans have nothing to shew, that any such thing is committed unto you.

Our Saviour having thus fully satisfied this Womans Scruple, and rectified her Erroneous Practise, by bringing of her unto a *Rule of Worship* ; which alone can be a comfortable ground of any Religious Action ; since God looks not onely after the Matter, but the Manner of our Worship ; and disdains to be served by the Inventions of Men ; since by their *Adding to his Word*, they onely presume to be Wiser and Holier then he ; Therefore our Saviour repeats and enforces again what he had mentioned before ; and tells her plainly, that as Gods Worship *vers. 23.* should

should no longer be confined to a certain place, by way of Special Holiness; so neither should it be clogged with those *Outward Forms* and *Ceremonies* as before. No such things as *Pompous Garments*, *Legal Washings* and *Fleshly Rites*, should be required any longer; but the *True Worshipers* should *worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth*; Which alone is the *True Worship*, because all those *External Rites*, were onely *Shadows* and *Representations* of it. As if our Saviour had said, it is no longer your *Temples*, nor your *Altars*, nor your *Outward State* and *Magnificence*; which God now looks after; but *Christ*, he seeks with earnestness, and approves with Delight and Complacency, onely such as worship him in a Spiritual and Inward Manner.

The reason of which our Saviour gives, in the words of the Text, because *God is a Spirit*, and, therefore he expects a *Worship* altogether suitable to his own Nature: *They that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth*.

In the words, there are two things considerable. 1. What God is. *God is a Spirit*. 2. What kind of *Worship* must be paid unto him. *They that Worship him, must Worship him in Spirit and in Truth*. From whence arise two Observations; the first of which I shall handle as a Doctrine, the other as an Use or Inference from it.

1. *God is a Spirit*: or, a Being altogether Spiritual.

2. *The Spiritual Worship of God*, is the onely *True Worship*.

For the understanding of the first, there are two things to be explained. 1. What is a *Spirit*.

2. In

2. In what sence, God is said to be a Spirit.

For the first, viz. what is a Spirit; the Schooles define it to be an *Immaterial* or *Incorporeal Substance*; where, if in stead of the word *Substance*, (which is a Term very few understand), they had put the word *Essence* or *Being* (which answer to the Greek *ουσια*, and to the Hebrew *חיה*) they had spoke some, but not all the Truth. For thus our Saviour likewise defines a Spirit, in opposition to a grosse and palpable Body. *A Luke 24. Spirit, said he, hath not Flesh and Bones as you see 39. me to have.* Which place though some have made use of for the definition of a Spirit; yet it is clear our Saviour speaks there only of a Spirit, in that sence that we call a *Phantasm* or an *Apparition*, a Spirit; and therefore *Ignatius* in one of his Epistles, instead of the word *νεψυχη* reads *δαίμονιον νεψυχη* *A bodiless Demon or Ghost.*

But in the word *Spirit*, is implied something more Positive, then barely to tell us, what it is not; and as in the Definition of a Man, it would but little satisfy us, to tell us, that he *is not an Horse, nor an House, &c.* because these Negative Descriptions would never lead us to those Essential Characters and Properties, by which the Nature of man might be discerned. So nakedly to tell us as the Schools do, that a Spirit is *Incorporeal*, i. e. *not a Body*; will give but very little satisfaction, to the Enquiry, *What it is.*

To find out therefore more positively what a Spirit is, I shall lay down this Ground; *The Nature of every thing is to be discerned by its manner of Operation*; as, though we can see neither Fire nor Air, yet we may justly conclude, they have Different

Different Natures, because they produce Diverse and Contrary effects. So that if there be some Things or Beings in the World ; which have such kind of Operations ; as are no way applicable to or produceable by Bodies ; then They have a Distinct Nature from Bodies ; i. e. They are Spirits.

What those Operations are, every man may observe in the Actions of his Soul ; And I shall instance onely in these three. 1. Power. 2. Presence. 3. Knowledge.

1. The first Action by which the Nature of the Soul of man may be discerned to be Spiritual, is Power ; I mean that *Autonomous* Or self-moving-virtue ; by which it can move, not onely it's self, but the Body too, to which it is conjoyned. And this no meer Body is capable of, for *motum in se* ; No Body can otherwise move, then as it hath an Outward Principle to move it ; but the Soul hath no other Motive of it's Actings, but it's own Will and Pleasure. And though there be some who affirm, that the Will doth alwayes follow the last dictate of the understanding ; yet this is Demonstrably false, by the experience of all men in the World ; as well as of the Apostle Paul who cries out of himself, *The things I like not, these do I.* And it is a very true saying of one, to whose writings the Christian world is little beholding ; *As oft as Reason is against a man, so oft will a man be against Reason.* For which no cause can be given, but meerly the Power of the Will, to move i. e. to determine it self, in spite of all contrary suggestions from the Understanding. Solomon therefore speaking of dying man, divides him

him into his two distinct, and seemingly inconsistent Natures; *The dust*, sayes he, *i. the Body, returns to the Earth, as it was; but the Spirit i. the Soul, returns to God who gave it.* It is the Spark of Divinity within us, which puts *Life and Motion* into the Dull and Unactive piece of Earth about us; and so enlivens it, for the doing of such Actions, as Flesh alone could not compass, without the Influence and Conduct of some more Heavenly and Spiritual Principle. Eccies. 12.7.

2. The second Operation which demonstrates the Soul of man to be a Spirit; is *Presence*. We know that every Body is tied and limited to a place, out of which it cannot stir; and whenever it is moved, it moves onely one way, and with one kind of Motion at once; making a dull leasurely progress; First how, then there by steps, without any Variety at all. Herein therefore doth the Spirituality* of the Soul of man most convincingly appear, in that at one instant it can attend so many different Employments; and without any distraction at all, wheels about in so many Contrary and Repugnant Motions; not onely *Seeing* in one place, *Hearing* in another, *Feeling* in a third; but it runs over Innumerable *Idea's*; it ranges infinitely distant places, it admits of all manner of Contraries; and yet remains still the same by one Entire, Absolute, Indivisible Act, influencing every Part of the Body, and Animating the whole, which were it not a *Spirit*, it could not do.

3. The last Operation of the Soul, which shewes it to be a Spirit, is *Knowledge*. The utmost perfection of a Body, is *Motion*; and let a

Body be vested with whatever Circumstances to set it out, yet *Figure* and *Motion*, do answer and resolve all it's *Phenomena*. But to reflect upon it self, to move, so as to know that it moves, to understand, and to be Conscious of it's own Actings; to take in all manner of *Idea's* and *Species* of things, and to Spiritualize them in its Apprehension; these with many millions of such kind of Actions, which are daily performed by the Soul of man, in the faculties of its Understanding and Will, are all beyond the Possibility of a Body; and therefore the Principle which produceth them is not a *Body*, i. e. It is a Spirit; And indeed, what ever our Modern *Sadduces* may argue (who are not afraid to tell us, that there is neither *Angel* nor *Spirit*) Yet when a man hath wearied himself with contemplating his Inward Frame, and in seeking to Unriddle those Mysteries, which he is alwayes privy to in himself; he will at last find it, not the most safe and pious onely, but the most reasonable way to conclude, that *there is a spirit in man, and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth Understanding*; as *Job* saith; or as *Solomon*, *The Mind of Man, is the Candle of the Lord*, i. e. a Light placed in us, and to be used by us, but springing from, and favouring of its Divine and Unconceiveable Original.

Job 32.8.
Prov. 20.
17.

Having thus, by those Actions of the Soul which every man is conscious to in himself, demonstrated, at least abundantly to my own satisfaction, that there is some *Being* or *Nature* in the World which is not Corporeal; I define a *Spirit* thus; A Spirit is a Being created by God, and endued

endued with Qualities, whereby it is enabled to move its self, and to reflect upon its own actings; and therefore Incorporeal, since neither of those Properties, are conceivable how they can be performed by any Body, in the most Subtil and Abstracted Consideration. And so much for the first Querie, viz. *What is a Spirit.*

2. Secondly, The next thing to be explained was, in what sense *God* is said to be a Spirit; And I answer, in all those senses, wherein a Spirit can be conceived or expressed by us.

1. Negatively, *God is a Spirit*, i. e. He is not a Body, but infinitely removed from, and incapable of those Imperfections, which do arise from Matter: according to that Definition of the Apostle *John*, *God is Light, and in him is no Darknesse at all*; i. e. No mixture of any thing, which might be an Allay to his Ineffable Purity and Perfection. 1 John
1. 5.

2. Comparatively, By way of Proportion or Resemblance to the Soul of man; Thus, *God is a Spirit*. i. e. what ever Excellence or Perfection we find in our selves, that is to be ascribed unto God, in a more Absolute and Perfect manner; as the Psalmist, *He that made the eye, shall not he see? He that made the ear, shall not he hear? &c.* And the Apostle, *As none knoweth the Things of Man, but the Spirit of Man, which is in him; so none knows the Things of God but the Spirit of God.* For since God made man after his own Image, there can be no Divine Quality in the Soul of man, but it is in the Arch-Type or Pattern in a more Supreme and Inexpressible degree. And therefore Psal. 94.
8.
1 Cor.
2. 12.

3. *God is a Spirit*, Transcendentally, i. e. In a way

way of Eminency and Superlativenesse of Perfection. Therefore God who doth often compare himself to man, thereby to familiarize himself unto our Apprehensions, doth as often take us off from dwelling too long upon those Thoughts, least we should thereby lessen God, and think him to be altogether like unto our selves. For this reason, we are frequently called upon, to consider that *God is in Heaven*, and *we are on Earth*; that, *The Heaven of Heavens is not able to contain Him*; whereas *Our Foundations are in the Dust*, with many Expressions to the same Purpose; So that as Shade to Light; as the Picture of the Sun in water, unto the Real Globe in the Firmament; as Painters Flame, unto a Burning Fire; or whatever else are most distant from the things they Figure; so is the soul of Man if compared to God. So that when we say *God is a Spirit*, the meaning is, God is a Being, Infinitely Perfect and Pure in himself, but altogether Incomprehensible and Inexpressible by us. And so much for the second Query, in what sense *God is a Spirit*.

Use.

The Use or Inference from hence is that *Spiritual Worship is the onely True Worship*, That is to say, In all our Prayers and Addresses to God, we must fix an eye of Faith, especially and mainly, upon those Attributes and Descriptions of God, which do most clearly represent and expresse his Spiritual Nature unto us.

Ephes 2.
12.

For the understanding of this, we must take Notice, that the principal thing which keeps a Man, in his Dark Estate of Unbelief and Unregeneracy, is a secret Thought, that there is no God at all; and this is the condition of all Natural men

men in the World; as *Paul* affirms of the *Ephesi-ans*, that, before their receiving of *Christ*, they were *Adversaries without God*, or plain *Atheists in the World*; and in another place, *The Gentiles knew not God*, know nothing of him; for as he argues, *how should they know, of whom they had not heard?* i. e. though God hath imprinted upon his Creatures certain legible Characters of his Power and Divine Goodness; yet very few can spel the meaning of them; or from the works they see, be brought to acknowledge a Power whom they do not see; as the Apostle elsewhere testifies, *The world by wisdom knew not God*. But when, by the Power of some conviction, arising either from an Intent view of the Frame & Make of the World; or from the observation of some remarkable turn of Providence, a man is brought off from his *Atheism*, he presently is apt to fall into another gulf as dangerous, and as fatal; and that is, of thinking God to be like Man; full of the same passions, and pleased with the same things, which we imagine are most taking with men like our selves. And this conceit lies at the bottom of every mans Nature, and is the Foundation of all that *Will-Worship*, and *Devised Service*, which heretofore was entertained in the *Gentile* or *Atheistical*; and, at this day reigns, in the *Papal* or *Antichristian* World; when men do measure God by themselves, and go no higher in the contemplation of his Infinity, then what they conceive is ascribable unto the highest strain of *Humane Excellence*.

This Erronious & sleight opinion, we are by all means to be armed and fortified against; for be-
sides

17b.f.4.
3.

1 Cor. 1.
21.

sides the mean and poor esteem it begets of God in our Thoughts; it doth necessarily draw along with it this conceit, that God is beholding to Man, and that we do oblige him by our Service. And therefore the Scripture is very expresse in declaring, that, *our Righteousnesse is nothing to him*; and that when God requires to be worshipped, he challengeth it onely as the Devout Homage of an Humble Soul; and not thereby in the least to encourage the Vanity and Pride of Boasters, since his greatnesse, is incapable of any Addition; God indeed doth in Scripture describe himself by such Names, as are of greatest Esteem and Reverence with men; such as are *King, Lord, Father, Master*, and the like, yet herein he is far from prescribing a meer Bodily and Outside Worship, such as those would have, who are as yet far from knowing, or at least from considering, that *God is a Spirit*; But the meaning of all those Expressions is this, that what kind of Outward Reverence we show unto persons, to whom we are so related, as a *Subject* is to his *Prince*, or a *Son* to his *Father*, or a *Servant* to his *Master*; the same by way of Analogy and Proportion, we should show to God, in the Inward Frame and Deportment of our Spirits, when we appear before him in any solemn way of Worship.

Now to advance and raise up the mind unto this necessary pitch of Devotion, there can be no better expedient given, then fixedly to contemplate the Spirituality of Gods Nature, unto which our worship must bear some proportion; and that will be, by fastning upon those Attributes

butes which do most represent his Spiritual Nature unto us. What those Attributes are, from what hath been said, may easily be gathered; for since *Power*, *Presence*, and *Knowledge*, are these Actions of the Soul, which do demonstrate it to be a spirit; it will follow then, since *God is a Spirit*, the Attributes which do most declare him to be so, are these three. 1. His *Omnipotence*, 2. His *Omnipresence*. 3. His *Omniscience*; which ought most intently to be eyed by us, in our Worship of, and Addresses to Him.

1. First, The first Attribute we should fix upon in our Worship of God, is his *Omnipotence*; which is in many and several Forms expressed in Scripture, all which, like so many lines pointing at one Center, do but speak this Truth, that *God can do what he will*, and that *nothing can withstand his VWill*; because the Will of the Creature, is onely Gods Creature; it is his Wheel in the VWatch, and moves onely as he will turn it; And the *Potter* cannot have more absolute power over, or lesse resistance from the *Clay* then God our Maker hath, if he so please to order it, from us his VVorkmanship.

The consideration of this, at that time when we come to VVorship God, besides that it gives God the Honour of his *Power*, which he desires should be Magnified; will be of Infinite use to us, in all the Course of our Lives, and in those several scenes of Providence we may fall under. As

1. This will be a wonderful encouragement unto us, to put up our Prayers to God, and to attend with Comfort the Successe and Issue of them.

them. For what should we despair of, if we can engage *Omnipotence* on our behalf? If therefore we miss of what we Petition for, *if we Ask and Have not*; It is not, because God is not able to do even more then we Ask, but because we *Ask a miss*, and not with that Faith, which is requisite to so Sacred an Action. It is our Unbelief of *Gods Power* which ties his hands; for did we pray with *Full Assurance*, that he whom we deal with could answer our most Laboured and Intense Requests, that he could satisfie our most Enlarged and Heightned Expectations; we should not depart so often as we do, without a Blessing. But God scorns a Suitor, that hath low thoughts of him; For what do we else but tacitly condemn God, if we think that it lies in a poor Creatures power to Ask, what the Great Creator cannot do? Yet this, as easie a matter as it may be supposed to be, hath been the great miscarriage of the Saints of Old; What made *Sarah* laugh, i. e. inwardly make a sport and jest of the Promise God made to give her *a Son in her Old Age*, but her doubting of this Attribute. *After I am waxed Old*, saith she, *shall I have pleasure, my Lord being old also*? In which words, she musters up all manner of Arguments to augment the Difficulty; and therefore the Lord to satisfie her, is fain to have recourse unto his own *Omnipotence*; *Is any thing*, saith he, *too hard for the Lord*? Intimating that, whatever she pretended, yet indeed, that was the Fundamental Article she doubted of. So what made *Moses* raise up so many Scruples, and urge so many Objections against his being sent to *Pharaoh*, alleadging that *he was not Eloquent, but slow of*

Gen. 18.
12.

Exod. 4.
1, 11.

of Speech, and slow of Tongue; intimating, that God could certainly do no great matter, by him who was laden with so many Imperfections; and withal insinuating, that God might do well to make a better choice, thereby laying a secret imputation upon Gods Wisdom, as well as his Power; as if God had not chose a fit Messenger to do his Errand. God therefore doth answer all his Objections, by raising him, from looking down upon himself that was sent, to look up to him that sent him; *Who, saith he, hath made Mans mouth, or who makes the Dumb, or Deaf, or Seeing, or Blind, is it not I the Lord?* i. shal God do the greater, and shal not he do the less? Shall he be able to make man, and shal he not be able afterwards to fit him for what Ends and Uses he pleases? In the very same manner we find afterwards, that *David* and *Zachary*, and the Disciples of our Saviour did often miscarry. So that as our Saviour tells them, *They could not cast out the Devil, because of their Unbelief; but if they had the least grain of Faith in God, they should presently be able even to remove Mountains, and nothing should be impossible for them*; so say I, the great cause why we thrive so ill in our Prayers and Supplications to God, it is because we are faint and timerous Askers; We do not by Faith set Gods Omnipotence on Work; but in a Dubious and Unresolved manner, we pray according to the Compass of what we see, and can Naturally hope to. And whilest we do so, it is no wonder if we obtain no great Matters from the Hands of God; for as we undervalue a Prince if we ask Trifles of him, so doth he disesteem God, who asks any thing be-

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low the Immediate Work of an *Almighty Power*; such as is Preservation from Danger, or support under it; Pardon of sin, and strength against it, and the like, which are Petitions that God loves to hear, for since when ever he Answers a Prayer, he would be known to do something, which onely he is able to bestow; and therefore by way of Prerogative and Excellence, he styles himself, *A God Hearing Prayer.*

2. The consideration of *Gods Omnipotence*, will take off all Despondency of Spirit, when Matters go otherwise with us, then we would have them. When we are put to a plunge, and are run into a wild Maze and Labyrinth of Perplexities, not knowing how to resolve, what will be the issue of such or such a Providence that crosseth us; a Belief of Gods Omnipotence will fix us again, and make us see clear day in the midst of our Doubts. It was the Impious Triumph of those Ungodly men, who had beset and surrounded *David*. 1. That they had left him no probable way to escape: *Many there be*, saith he, *that say to my Soul, there is no help for him in God.* As if they had said, we have now made sure work with him, and so ordered the matter, that Omnipotence it self cannot rescue him. As those wicked Pharisees, when they had nailed our Saviour to the Cross, they cut him yet more to the Heart, with this Reviling Speech, *He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him, for he said, I am the Son of God.* VWhich Speeches uttered with so much contumely and bitter Scorn, did as our Saviour complains, *break his Heart*; and no doubt pierced deeper into

Psa. 3. 2.
Mat. 27.
43.

Psal. 69.
20.

to his Soul, then either the *Thorns* or *Spear* did into his Body. But what did our Saviour, what did *David* in that Extremity? For *David*, we find him in the same *Psal*, notwithstanding all this, appropriating God unto himself, and boasting of him, as his *Shield*, his *Glory*, and the lifter up of his *Head*; and to show how much he slighted those proud boasts of his Insolent Enemies, and how much they were mistaken in their Triumph: *I laid me down, saith he, and slept, i. e. I quietly reposed my self in the midst of all these shakings; and that we might wonder at this his Calmness and Security, he adds, For the Lord sustained me.* Thus likewise did our Saviour, just after those words uttered by the *Pharisees*, which were so long before prophesied of, that they should be spoken, our Saviour adds, *But thou O Lord art my God, from my Mothers Belly; Be not therefore far from me, for trouble is near.* As if he had said, Times of deep discouragement, and Amazing distractions are thy Times, therefore now appear vigorously, when thou alone canst have the glory. When a Creature is wholly forsaken as it were, when it is hung round with Terrour, and even fainting for want of Inward supply and succour; then if a soul can but say to God, *Thou art the Lord, the Lord Almighty*; and by an Act of Faith, redouble, *Thou art my God*; what should it fear, or what can it tremble at? *For if God be for us, who can be against us?* the World hath not in it Terrours or Discouragements enow to fright such an one, whose God is the Lord; and who hath Omnipotence it self for his shield and Protection.

*Psal. 22.
10.*

3. Lastly, the consideration of Gods Omnipotence, will Quiet and Pacifie the Soul, under its *Afflictions*; where by *Afflictions*, I mean Spiritual and Inward Griefs; such as are *sense of sin, fear of wrath, Dispair of Mercy*, and the like: For as for other things, viz. *Want, Poverty, Disgrace* and the like which pass with the World for *Afflictions*, and are the ordinary Themes of Declaimers in Divinity, if we do ill, they are our Wages, as due to us as hire is to the Labourer: if we do well, they are Marks of Honour, and ought to be triumphed and gloried in, as our Choicest and most Signal Priviledges. But when God hath put his Terrors into the Soul, when he appears our Enemy, and by an Immediate Act of his Power, speaks Dispair and Anguish unto a Wounded Conscience; a soul in that Case hath no possibility of Relief, but what it can gather from acting Faith upon Gods Omnipotence. For it is upon this score that we may beg for pardon, as *Moses* did for the *Israelites*, and now let the Power of my Lord be great, as thou hast said, *I am a God long-suffering, Therefore forgive the sin of this people, according to the greatness of thy Mercy.* For great Power is alwayes accompanied with great Mercy, for such an one, will consider our Frame, will remember that we are but Dust, as *David* speaks, or as the Church, *He will not Afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men.* God who is infinite in Power, doth not delight to shew it in troubling his poor Creature, who alwayes lies under his Lash, and cannot bear with the Effects of his Anger. Therefore when *Iob* complained so grievously that God hedged up his way, with *Afflictions*,

Numb.
14.17.

Psal 103
1, 1.
Psal 3
35.

Actions, as with Thorns: that he did find occasions against him, and counted him for his Enemy; with many such expressions, as the bitterness of his Soul did cause him to utter: Elihu answers him in Gods stead; First, in minding him that God Job. 33. was greater than Man, and therefore it was in vain, to reply against God, since he gave not any Account of his Matters. And least this Answer should onely serve to keep Job from Complaining, but not from Repining; least it should onely make him silence his Discontents, but not totally suppress them: Elihu reproves that Consideration with adding this, That God can do no wrong, and the Almighty cannot commit Iniquity. The Job 34. Force of which Reason, consists, not onely in this, because Sovereign or Almighty Power, makes all his Actions Just, who ever hath it (which is a Curious & an Unprofitable Notion in this Case) but because God, in his Word, hath tied himself to Rules; he hath been pleased to Oblige himself to be Gracious, and to attend his peoples good, in the Exercise of his Power. And therefore in stead of those bitter Complaints against God, wherewith persons Mouths are usually filled in such Cases, let them rather be opened in thankfulnesse, since God doth in very Faithfulness correct, and hath designs of Mercy, when he plungeth us into the Depth of Misery. For Heb. 12. the End of all is to purge out our sin, that we may partake of his Holinesse.

So much for the first Attribute, viz. Gods Omnipotence.

2. Secondly, The other Attributes, which do belong to God, as he is a *Spirit*; and which in our

our Approaches to him, are most to be reflected upon by us: are his *Omnipresence*, are his *Omniscience*; I joyn them both together, because they are both but one Act, and in Scripture Language are never several; In which to see and to know is all one. Thus God is said *I see all things*; that *nothing is concealed from him*; that, All things are vain & naked *τερεχνησμένα* *Anatomized* or *Diserted*, their *In-side* as it were turned out before him. That there is no Possibility for any Action, no not for a Thought, to be hid from God. Now with many other Expressions to the same purpose; because he fills all Places, he is present to all things, he is Intimate and Inward with all the Actions of his Creatures.

The understanding of this the Psalmist doth acknowledge to be very difficult, *such knowledge*, Psal. 119. 6. *saith he, is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it*; but yet he gives a Reason which Psal. 94. doth unanswerably prove it, *He that formed the eye shall not he see? he that teacheth much knowledge, shall not he know?* Yes, saith he, the Psal. 139. Lord doth know the Thoughts of Man that they are *vanitie*. David therefore doth most excellently describe the All-searching virtue of Gods Omniscience, when speaking in the person of one, that would fain shut himself out of Gods View, and retire from his Inspection, he asks *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy Presence?* And then he reckons up every thing, which a vain man would imagine to be a sufficient place of Secrecy. *If I go to Heaven, thou art there; If I make my bed in Hell, thou art there also. If I think to travel and to quit*

er, nothing else but a calling of God to take
 Notice that we dare neglect him. So much of
 Outward Deportment, as may demonstrate we
 are inwardly affected with what we are doing,
 is without doubt necessary; but then it must be
 paid, not to the Place, but to the Ordinance;
 Not to the Enclosure of Walls, but to the Di-
 vine Administrations in it; for when the Pub-
 lick Duties are Ended, the Place is as Common, *Exod. 19.*
 (I mean as any special Holinesse) as that Mount ^{13.}
 was, when the Trumpet ceased from sounding.
 Let us then consider *Gods Omnipresence*, that we
 may learn to feel him with our Hearts; and then
 our Bodies will quickly be supple and pliant
 enough, but till then we offer only an Unclean
 thing; a Carcasse only, which will be so far
 from being accepted, that it will be imputed to
 us for sin. The Apostle doth exhort the *Corin-*
thian Women, to have a *Care of their Head*; i. to ^{1 Cor. 1.}
 be veiled, *because of the Angels*; which may be un-
 derstood either of *Good Angels*, who would make
 use of their Beauty, as Baits, to tempt others unto
 Unclean and Lustful Thoughts, or else, of *good An-*
gels who love comeliness of Behaviour in Publick
 Assemblies; the Rule of which comeliness, in
 Men, is what ever is Manly; in Women, what-
 soever is Modest. Others perhaps will draw
 out for *Outward Decency*, in
 whom that only
 the Church
 An-

portune and solicit? this should take up our souls, and fill us with Thoughts, suitable to the Majesty and purity of him, before whose Eyes, and to whose view, we do present our selves; and then indeed we Honour him.

2. Lastly, This Consideration that God is *Omnipresent*, i. e. alwayes beholding and observing us, will put the heart into a Religious, Careful and Obediential Frame, even after Publick Duties are ended. The same Posture of Mind, we had at Church, we shall carry along with us, if we think that we are still in the presence of God; It is indeed too true, that most mens Devotion doth end with the Ministers last Prayer, then, like a Watch wound up too high, we break the string, and let all unravel again, &c. As *Cain* is said to go out from the Presence of the Lord; so do we, thinking perhaps, that God is no where but when we last spake to him. But Holy men we find did act clean otherwise; *Job* said, He made a Covenant with his Eyes; he would not so much as look upon a Maid; what was it that made him so watchful and solicitous? Doth not, saith he, he see all my Wayes, and count all my Steps? This Thought did make him strangle sin in the Birth, and stifle it in its first Conception, So *David*, I have set the Lord alwayes before me, saith he, and it follows, therefore I shall not be moved, nor shaken in my Resolves for if Omnipotent Offend

King Holinesse in the fear of God. Gods Indwel-
 ling and Nearnesse to us, is the most Potent Mo-
 tive to our ~~Heart~~ Heart-purity & ~~perfection~~ perfection
 of Holinesse. To conclude therefore, Did men
 think, that if they went to their Chambers, God
 was there; if to their Studies, God was there;
 if to their Beds, God was still there; Within,
 Without, About them; curiously marking their
 steps, and with his Balance weighing their Acti-
 ons; they would not, they durst not think that
 Darknesse could hide their sin, or that a Closet
 can conceal Iniquity. Thou Fool! what ever
 thou art, who sinnest, because, as thou thinkest,
 no Eye beholds thee, does not God see? and
 will not thy Conscience witnesse? What wilt,
 what canst thou say, when God calls thee to
 Judgement! when he shall charge upon thee,
 at such a Time, in such a Place, upon such an
 Occasion, thou saidst in thine Heart, Tush God
 doth not see it; and on this Motion didst not
 fear to do that which had thy Father, or thy
 Friend been by, thou wouldest have been asha-
 med of. Let us not then dare to satisfie our
 Lusts, or please our Vain and Irregular Desires,
 till we can bribe God to turn away his Eyes, and
 not to behold our Folly. Till then to be Secure,
 is to be Desperate; and to sin, is nothing else,
 but to Affront God unto his Face, and to tell
 him, ~~see, or that he cannot Pu-~~ Attributes which
 long to God,
 Pre-

